

Spring 1-15-2009

ENG 3600-001

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Dr. William J. Searle

English 3600—001—9:00 to 9:50—MWF—CH 3170

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Office Hours: 12:00 to 12:50 MWF; 3:00 to 3:50 Fri. and by appointment

The following texts are used for English 3600:

Robert Alter and Frank Kermode. Editors. *The Literary Guide to the Bible*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap/Harvard U. Press, 1987.

John B. Gabel, Charles B. Wheeler, Anthony D. York. *The Bible as Literature: An Introduction*. Fourth Edition. New York, New York: Oxford U. Press, 2000.

Wayne B. Meeks. Editor. *The Harper Collins Study Bible: New Revised Standard Edition*. San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins, 1993.

Attendance: Plan to attend every class. You might glance at page 55 of the 2006-2007 catalog concerning this matter. Obviously, a student seldom does well in a course and never performs to his or her potential when he or she cuts class frequently. For that reason, I have established the following attendance policy. For every five unexcused absences, your final grade will be lowered one letter grade. If you have ten unexcused absences, your final grade will be lowered two letter grades, etc. Late papers will be accepted only in cases of extreme emergency—severe illness, official university activity, or other urgent reasons.

Departmental statement on plagiarism: “Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—‘the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s original work’ (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty up to and including a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.”

Grading: There will be a final and a midterm, each worth 20 percent; frequent group, reading check quizzes, and perhaps a group project, all worth 30 percent; and a medium-length paper (6 to 8 pages of typewritten text) worth 30 percent, due approximately 4 or 5 classes before the end of the semester. Of course, you are responsible for keeping up with reading and writing assignments, even if you are unable to attend class. Learn the assignment from a classmate or from your instructor. If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations contact the Coordinator of the Offices of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Course Description:

A best seller since the invention of the printing press, and, for at least a thousand years before that, a crucial text in the West, the Bible, as comprehensive as it is rich, still compels our attention today for its diversity, literary craft, and influence upon later writers. To those familiar with its content, there is virtually no area of human experience that is unexplored, no literary style that does not appear, and no archetype that does not come alive within its pages.

Antedating both Chaucer and Dante, and in large part, Virgil, by many centuries, and, in some portions, perhaps Homer as well, the Bible has cast its imaginative spell upon such English-speaking writers as gifted and distinct as Shakespeare, Milton, Blake, and T. S. Eliot. Closer to home, and more recently, Flannery O'Connor, John Updike, Larry Woiwode, and Rita Dove are either aware of or echo its many chords. Can any student receive a truly liberal education without knowing the literary dimension of this significant work? Hardly.

Class procedure will consist of very informal lecture and discussion periods, group work, and when relevant video. Grades will be based on class participation, occasional reading check quizzes, a medium-length paper, a midterm, and a final.

A Very Tentative Outline for English 3600

Wk #1—Mon. Jan. 12—Discussion of course and assignment of texts.

Suggested reading: Chapter I, "The Bible as Literature," in *The Bible as Literature: An Introduction*. (BAL)

Wed. " 14—video, most probably a segment of the documentary *Who Wrote The Bible?*

Fri. " 16—Genesis, chapters 1-3 in the *Harper/Collins Study Bible* (HSB)

Wk #2—Mon. " 19—KING'S BIRTHDAY OBSERVANCE—NO CLASS

Wed. " 21—Genesis, chapters 4-11 in HSB, video, reading check quiz or GW

Fri. " 23—Genesis, chapters 12-25, the Abraham story, video

Wk #3—Mon. " 26—Genesis, the Abraham story, video

Suggested reading: J. P. Fokkelman's essay "Genesis" in *The Literary Guide to the Bible* (Guide)

Wed. “ 28—Distribution and discussion of essay assignment due April 21, the Friday of the second last week of class; 2 points extra for all papers turned in on time or early.

Fri. “ 30—Genesis: chapters 26-36 in HSB; Isaac and the story of Jacob; graded group work

Wk #4—Mon. ‘ 2—Genesis: chapters 37-50; the Joseph story; reading check quiz or group work

Wed. ‘ 4—Genesis, the Joseph story, video?

Fri. “ 6—Exodus: Chapters 1-13 in HSB; video

Suggested reading: J. P. Fokkelman’s essay “Exodus” in Guide

Wk #5—Mon. 9—Exodus, chapters 14-25 in HSB; graded group work, video?

Wed. 11—Exodus: Chapters 26-35 in HSB, video

Fri. 13—LINCOLN’S BIRTHDAY OBSERVANCE—NO CLASS

Wk #6—Mon. 16—Excerpts from Numbers, Deuteronomy, Leviticus—handout
On major themes and issues.

Wed. 18—Book of Joshua, graded group work, handout on Assyrian
Military narratives.

Fri. 20—Joshua, group work

Wk #7—Mon. 23—Judges, chapters 1-16 in HSB, reading check quiz: Deborah,
Barak, Jael and Sisera, Samson and Delilah

Wed. 25—Conclude Judges

Fri. “ 27—Book of Ruth; Study Guide for Midterm distributed.

Suggested reading: Jack M. Sasson’s essay “Ruth” in Guide

Wk #8—Mon. Mar 2—I Samuel: Samuel, Saul, and the Philistine crisis, video

Wed 4—Midterm on Genesis, Exodus, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, etc.

Fri. “ 6—I Samuel: Jonathan, Michal, and the rise of David

Wk #9--Mon. Mar. 9 Samuel: David and Bathsheba, rebellion, death of David

Wed. ‘ 11--if time permits, two portraits of Solomon: I Kings: chapters 3-11
And 2 Chronicles: 1-9:31.

Suggested reading: George Sauran’s “I and 2 Kings” in Guide

Fri. 13—Book of Esther

Suggested Reading: Jack M. Sasson’s “Esther” in Guide

SPRING RECESS—MARCH 14 THRU 22—NO CLASS

Wk #10—Mon. Mar 23—Handouts on Major Prophets—selections from HSB

Student conferences on final paper: MTWThF fro the next several weeks

Suggested reading: Chapter VIII of BAL “The Prophetic Writings”

Wed. “ 25—The Book of Job, graded group work

Fri. “ 27—The Book of Job

Suggested reading: Moshe Greenberg’s “Job” in Guide

Wk #11—Mon. “ 30—If time permits, selected Psalms

Wed. Apr 1—If time permits, Song of Songs

Suggested reading: Francis Landy’s “Song of Songs” in Guide

Fri. “ 3—Book of Jonah

Suggested reading: James P. Ackerman’s “Jonah” in Guide

Wk #12—Mon. “ 6—The Gospel of Mark

Wed. Apr, 8—The Gospel of Mark

Suggested reading: John Drury’s “Mark” in Guide

Fri. “ 10—The Gospel of Matthew

Suggested reading: Frank Kermode’s “Matthew” in Guide

Wk #13—Mon “ 13—Gospel of Matthew

Suggested reading: Chapter XIV of Bal, “The Gospels,” a superb overview

Wed. “ 15—The Gospel of Matthew

Fri. “ 17—The Gospel of Luke

Suggested reading: John Drury’s “Luke” in Guide

Wk #14—Mon. “ 20—The Gospel of Luke

Wed. “ 22—The Gospel of John

Fri. “ 24—paper due; The Gospel of John

Suggested reading: Frank Kermode's "John" in Guide

Wk #15—Mon. Apr. 27—Acts of the Apostle

Suggested reading: Chapter XV, "Acts and Letters" in BAL

Wed. " 29—Acts of the Apostles

Suggested reading: James A. Robinson's "Acts" in Guide

Fri. May 1 —Loose ends of Acts; review and evaluation of course; Study
Guide Distributed.

FINAL EXAMS: MAY 4 THRU MAY 8 (everything after the midterm)

CELL PHONES: Please keep them turned off and out of sight during class. For obvious reasons, please do not consult a cell phone during an exam.